

The McGill Daily

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Resting on our Laurels Since 1911

Monday, October 27, 1997

SSMU says 'NO' to plan G

All executives present are unanimous in their opposition to the Plan

by Tamana Kochar

SSMU has voted in opposition of Plan-G.

At last Thursday's council meeting, SSMU voted down a motion to endorse the November 3rd civil disobedience movement and demonstration at Complex G in Québec City.

The four SSMU Executives - all but President Tara Newell unanimously opposed supporting the action.

Plan-G is aimed at mobilizing activists fighting against all forms of neoliberalism, specifically the Québec government's slashing of the social safety net.

However, there were some dis-

several CEGEPs and Concordia's Student Union (CSU) have already thrown their support behind the action.

VP - External of the CSU David Smaller said, "Plan G is phenomenal in that it situates students in a much larger social and political context. Youth unemployment is so high, personal bankruptcy rate is sky-rocketing and student debt is ever increasing. These are not non-student issues because everything is tied into the bigger picture. CSU endorsed it because we feel that mainstream society is headed towards increasing powerlessness and increasing inequality."

Society in a bad light.

"It will be a lot of bad publicity for SSMU," she said.

Erin Runions, Québec Regional President of Canadian Federation of Students was among those disappointed by SSMU's decision.

"It was too radical an action for them," she said.

Runions said she believes that Plan G will send a clear message to the government that their agenda will not be accepted including cuts to education.

Although VP-External Lisa Phipps has been outspoken in opposition to the Québec government's policy towards education funding, she too opposed SSMU's involvement in Plan-G.

In a report released on October 23, 1997, Phipps gave her reasons for taking this position.

"The six demands are broad in scope outreaching too many social issues and therefore the issue of post-secondary education may get lost." Phipps stated she is concerned as to "which message will be heard and which message will be predominant."

Phipps specifically addressed Plan-G's demand that the work week be reduced to 32 hours.

Phipps also stated that the method of protest, that of civil disobedience, may be premature. Phipps worried that "all negotiating tactics have not been exhausted."

continued on page 8

Words of wisdom overheard at the council meeting...

"I think Plan G is a good idea, but when too many good ideas come together, it's a bad idea."

- Elizabeth Gomery
VP University Affairs

"We would face mockery from people who truly know the facts about how the world works."

- Sam Kramer
Clubs Rep

"This is asking for everything except world peace."

- speaker unknown

"If we supported this, we'd be supporting a Marxist revolution."

- speaker unknown

"It's just too many principles at the same time."

- Elizabeth Gomery

"I don't believe any of us have the education to support these demands - we don't have all the facts."

- speaker unknown

"We're in principle for this, but against civil disobedience. Our mandate is only education."

- Lisa Phipps
VP External



Phipps fails to take a stand

senting voices.

Speaking in favor of the motion, Mario Nigro, Law representative to SSMU argued, "We don't do enough action here. We should do it even though some of us have personal reservations."

SSMU's decision not to support the plan is particularly alarming as

Encouraging people at the council meeting to vote against the motion, Elizabeth Gomery, SSMU VP - University said, "I am not against social solidarity and the principles of this plan but against trying to tackle too much at the same."

Gomery argued that involvement in Plan-G would make the Student's

SSMU vs. Québec

by Jason Chow

A court date has been set to decide the legality of Québec's differential tuition fee policy.

Last year, the PQ government introduced a \$1200 tuition hike for students who are not Québec residents, raising fees to \$2868 compared to \$1668 paid by Québec students.

SSMU has launched a legal challenge against the Québec Provincial Government to have these fees ruled illegal and unconstitutional.

The case will be heard in Québec Superior Court on Dec. 2 and 3.

Elisabeth Gomery, VP Univer-

sity Affairs is optimistic about the case. "We are very pleased to finally get a chance to present our case. We have a good chance of succeeding."

André Durocher, the lawyer who heads the SSMU case, attacked the policy, calling it unconstitutional. "Section 6 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms states that in a federal country, people have the right to move freely from one province to another." Differential fees, he argues, is a limit to the free mobility guaranteed by the constitution.

SSMU will also argue that the Education Minister Pauline Marois

violated the Québec Education Act by discriminating against a certain group of students.

Jean Leclerc, Communications Agent for Minister Marois justified this policy saying, "We have this policy because we believe that students will have to pay the same amount to study as they would in their home province."

The decision to take the government to court was made by SSMU in December 1996. Interrogations and pro-forma meetings have already been held. The trial on Dec. 2 and 3 will be the final step in the legal process. A judge will rule on

Dec. 3 whether or not the tuition policy is legal.

In the event of an unfavourable ruling, Gomery pledged to appeal the case. "We'll take it all the way to the Supreme Court if necessary."

Despite the fact that the policy affects all out-of-province students in all Québec universities, McGill is the only school that is challenging the government. The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations and the Canadian Federation of Students, both national organizations, have only given McGill verbal endorsements.

Even Concordia University has

done little but give moral support to the McGill team. David Smaller, VP External of the Concordia Student Union (CSU) was quoted in the Gazette supporting the law-suit but maintained that the CSU would not join the suit. He added, "I'm not too keen on being McGill's farm team."

Gomery lamented the lack of the apparent lack of enthusiasm for the fight, saying, "I am disappointed by [the fact that] no one else is taking the torch."

McGill is especially affected by this policy with approximately 25% of the student population comprising of out-of-province students.

PQ to offer new loan program

by Idella Sturino

MONTREAL (CUP) Quebec students who leave school buried in debt can soon expect easier loan repayment terms.

Graduates who owe the provincial government for student loans will be able to temporarily defer their payments if they lose their jobs, announced Quebec Education Minister Pauline Marois last week.

Under the proposed changes, graduates will be able to seek deferred debt payment for up to three consecutive six-month periods within five years of graduation.

Marois also announced that the education ministry plans to forgive approximately 10 per cent of graduates' debts if their studies are completed without interruptions and they received a grant from the Quebec government.

Ministry statistics indicate that many Quebec students have a stake in the proposed plan. In the 1995-96 academic year, 160,566 students received some form of financial aid from the provincial government. Of those, 71,506 received both loans and grants.

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note from below...

During a Council meeting last Thursday, members of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) tabled a motion to recommend that McGill's Board of Governors include an opt-out clause in its agreement with the *McGill Daily*. If this motion passes next week, the recommendation would lobby the Board of Governors provide the option for individual students to reclaim the \$6.70 levy which helps to finance the operations of the paper. As a crucial portion of its revenue, student levies make up a full third of our funding. By placing this money in jeopardy, the survival of the *Daily* as an autonomous newspaper would be called into question.

The discussion followed a recent article published in *The Tribune* that makes reference to the minutes of a Board of Governors meeting convened last May. At that meeting, Sevag Yeghoyan, who is no longer a McGill student, brought forth a motion to include an opt out clause in the McGill Agreement with the *Daily*. This agreement is currently under negotiation. The motion was voted on, and failed.

At the time, questions of an opt-

out clause failed because of procedural problems. More importantly, without student funding, the *Daily* would cease to publish. Student newspapers rely on revenue to survive. Whether these funds are collected directly from students in the form of a levy, or buried in student fees often makes the difference between maintaining autonomy, or having to answer to a student government which controls the purse strings.

Last year a new constitution for the *McGill Daily* was discussed, democratically voted on, and passed by students. That discussion never included any mention of an opt-out clause, nor has any student approached the *Daily's* democratically elected Board of Directors with such a request. If SSMU votes to recommend to McGill's Board of Governors that an opt-out clause be included in our agreement, it would be side-stepping constitutional procedures voted on last year. SSMU would be taking matters its own hands.

The limited debate surrounding the recommendation for an opt-out clause at last Thursday's Council meeting took place without any notice being given to the *Daily*. What's worse is that the issue was raised without consulting students by a government which represents only undergraduates, not everyone who pays a levy.

What seems to be getting lost in the shuffle are the reasons why students found it essential to support a free press in the first place.

In 1981, when the *Daily* became McGill's only newspaper to be free from university and student government control a free press was recognized by students and administrators alike as essential to foster a democratic community. This need exists now, more than ever.

Over fifteen years later, the *Daily* remains a democratically run newspaper, committed to providing an independent analysis of issues affecting students. The *Daily's* autonomy was secured to provide a voice for students, and to protect their rights. Anyone is eligible to become a voting staff member through the contribution of articles, photos, or time towards the production of the paper.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the *Daily*, I strongly encourage you to contact any editor at 398-6784.

Sonia Verma
Co-ordinating Editor

editorial

If you skim through a random selection of Montréal's weeklies you may feel the need for a cigarette. At least that's what companies such as Export A, Belvedere and du Maurier are betting on, and cashing in on. But following an overwhelming staff vote in favour of maintaining our longstanding boycott of cigarette advertisements, *The Daily*, for one, isn't buying.

The decision coincides with the one year anniversary of then federal Health Minister David Dingwall's failure to implement long-promised legislation to reinstate a ban on tobacco advertising. Last-minute lobbying by the industry succeeded in bullying the Liberal government to back off.

The ban would have effectively curbed the industry's consistent targeting of young people through glitzy and costly ad campaigns. This week's crop of ads on the back page of *Voir*, *Hour*, *Mirror* and *McGill Tribune*, for example, feature full-colour shots of the

Charlevoix Car Rally. Such ads are typical of the tobacco industry's insidious advertising tactics, highlighted by their sponsorship of events attended primarily by young people, such as the Jazz Festival or the Grand Prix.

Smoking remains the most preventable cause of death in North America. Tobacco companies, in a beleaguered attempt at self-justification have persistently denied any link between advertising and cigarette sales. If cigarette sales are indeed unaffected by advertising, why are tobacco companies so desperate to sink their claws deeper into the McGill market via *The Daily*?

The Liberal government's repeated failure to stand up to powerful industry is inexcusable, but hardly surprising. Consider it pay-back for the tobacco industry's support of the Liberal Party which rang in at \$63 447 in 1995 and \$92 053 in 1994.

The Daily refuses to endorse the underhanded tactics of the to-

bacco industry. The practice of boycotting does not amount simply to a silent, self-righteous protest. It sends a clear message to cigarette companies that we oppose their complete absence of ethics.

Printing cigarette ads would be tantamount to selling out, and relinquishing our editorial integrity in favour of colour splashed across our pages. The impact of an investigative article probing the Liberal government's cosy relationship with the tobacco industry, for instance, would be undermined by a prominent du Maurier advertisement on the following page.

The *Daily*, like most publications depends partially on ever-diminishing ad sales to survive. But somebody has to draw the line somewhere when it comes to allowing problematic industries to exert more influence by throwing their weight (and money) around. Accepting cigarette ads, in our opinion, would cross that line.

-The Staff of the McGill Daily

letters

Open Letter to Bernard Shapiro

Dear Principal Shapiro,

On November 3rd, 1997, a coalition of student groups, labour unions, and community organisations will be joining forces to close down the main government building in Québec City, Le Complexe G. "Plan G" is a non-violent action and demonstration organised with the goal of forcing the Québec Government to acknowledge that the people of Québec remember who they voted for a party with social-democratic policies. These same people are not going to stand by passively as this government reneges on its promises and dismantles the social programs that all of us consider part and parcel of our society.

McGill students are organising to participate in this action. We are demanding that the government restore funding to post-secondary education. We are demanding that the government stick by its policy of accessible high quality public post-secondary education. This means not only maintaining the tuition freeze, but also restoring, and increasing the operating grants to the universities.

When you and I met this summer, we agreed that, above and beyond our differences in ideology, the students and administration could join forces when it came to demanding a stop to cuts to university operating grants. Moreover, at the recent annual general meeting of the Corporate Higher Education Forum, you argued that if universities were to remain high quality, the government must be prepared to invest real core funding in them. Clearly, on the matter of cuts, we agree.

"Plan G" is the opportunity for

students, administration, faculty, and staff on this campus to join forces against the cuts to post-secondary education. The administration's standard methods of lobbying the government have failed. The cuts continue. Its time to send a strong, united message to the government. Its time to up the ante. We call on you, Principal Shapiro, to join forces with us in our resistance. This is your opportunity to stand behind your students on an issue that we all agree on!

OUR STUDENTS MUST BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE!

Principal Shapiro, we ask you to support this action. We ask you to send a memo to professors requesting that students who decide to participate in the mass demonstration, in support of the blockade, on November 3rd, not be penalized for not attending class that day. Please, Principal Shapiro, do not let us down.

Anna Kruzynski
University and Academic Affairs
Coordinator
Post-Graduate Students' Society

No love lost for Red Cross

To the Daily,

While David D'Andrea's opinion article, "Why I Love the Blood Drive" (which appeared in the October 16th Queer Issue of the *Daily*), certainly shows how varied political opinions are among queer men, it is important to realize that D'Andrea's defense of the Canadian Red Cross's discrimination is neither the official view of LBGTGM nor that of most queer

men. Many of the arguments in the article are clearly problematic.

To begin with, D'Andrea justifies discrimination by making examples of safe places for minority groups to voice their opinion in absence of the oppressing force. Such spaces are created by the the Women's Union and LBGTGM (Actually, this is wrong since no LBGTGM activities are exclusive to any group - including straight people. We have even had a straight facilitator for the Gay Men's Discussion Group).

As well, he refers to same-sex educational differentiation demanded by ACT-UP Paris. (While admittedly I do not know too much about the situation, it sounds like the problem in Paris was a heterosexist approach to AIDS education.) These activities deal with society's problems and are therefore based on social categorization. The blood donation process, however, is a of a medical nature and should be based purely on scientific knowledge. This is the discrimination that we are fighting. As well D'Andrea claims that a biased approach is a safer one whereas in reality, basing on social categorization and not the actual high risk activities which spread AIDS is putting the blood supply at risk.

Finally, the claims that because of literacy level differences, donors many may not understand what "unprotected anal sex is" is ridiculous. The point is in reality irrelevant seeing as this section of the questionnaire is asked by a nurse who is trained to answer any question that the donor might have.

Edward G. Howey
Co-Political Coordinator of
LBGTGM

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Angry Dion Minister accuses

by Jeff Webber

Federal Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion denounced what he called separatist blackmail at a Moot Court talk Wednesday. He also reiterated the federal Liberal government's policy towards national unity. Organized by English rights group Alliance Québec, the audience was largely comprised of federalists and Alliance Québec sympathizers.

Dion described his role as Intergovernmental Affairs Minister as being, in actuality, a National Unity minister. He perceives his job as entailing two main objectives: first, taking initiative towards the cessation of separatism in Quebec, and second, ensuring that Quebec can no longer use even the threat of separatism as "blackmail," when engaging in negotiations with the federal government. Dion declared that the way Quebec's provincial government operates in this manner is essentially undemocratic.

"The use of separation as a political weapon, to say if you don't give this or that to our province we may leave, is not the way to discuss in a democracy, and to find healthy solutions," Dion said to a vigorous round of applause from the audience.

Dion continued, stating that no well-established democratic country (countries he defined as having ex-

isted as full-fledged democracies for over twelve years) other than Canada, operates under the threat

problems than anticipated.

"So if you go to another country, the threat of a secession is automatically connected with something very, very grave," he said.

But Dion showed an understanding of the sentiment behind separatism. The English language has become the international language of business, the internet, and pop culture. Dion said that many French-speaking Quebecers are wary of the disappearance of their language in an age where assimilation seems imminent.

"Your fellow citizens of our French-speaking community in Québec are in a unique situation, not only a minority in Canada, they are a minority in their continent," he stated.

He cited reasons for why this fear resonates with some validity for French-speaking Quebecers.

"It is the first time in the history of humanity where the number of languages is decreasing instead of increasing," he said. "So the argument [of separatists] that in order to secure their identity, their language, their collective community, they need to be not only the majority in their province, but the majority in a state, is a very powerful argument."

After describing the seeming relevance of the separatist argument, he attempted to belittle the cause of

"The use of separation as a political weapon, to say if you don't give this or that to our province we may leave, is not the way to discuss in a democracy, and to find healthy solutions."

of secession. He qualified this statement by explaining that in the case of Belgium there is a threat of secession, but that it is relatively new compared to the thirty year old threat in Canada.

By comparing Canada's situation to other developed democracies, Dion emphasized the distinctiveness of Canada's situation, which he sees as troublesome. However, he failed to offer any solutions other than just stating it as a problem in itself.

In his eyes, the reason for the existence of a secessionist threat is that many Quebecers are being misled by separatist leaders.

"We Canadians in our history have never... never have we had the bad luck of experiencing a national tragedy."

He explained that other countries who go through the process of secession always encounter more

Walksafe launches Organizers hope for more

by Melissa Fleming

There are few McGill students who have not, at one time or another, wandered down Milton to the Second Cup, or to a friend's house on DuRocher. The McGill Ghetto is an institution for many McGill students, their home away from home after the first requisite year in residence.

Jane Danek, a U2 student at McGill feels very safe walking in the McGill Ghetto, even at night. "I used to leave the balcony door open all the time, and nothing ever happened, I even have a pet squirrel now! When I'm walking around the Ghetto, I generally choose well lit streets. There are always people around in the Ghetto - talking and laughing, which makes me feel less vulnerable."

Although many students that were interviewed felt safe walking around the Ghetto, McGill Walksafe (an organization that offers students escorts to walk around the Montréal area) saw the need for a student-based audit of the student ghetto. A letter from Walksafe explaining the need for the audit pointed to "a rise in reported incidents" as justification for the audit.

The group hopes to complete an assessment of safety of the ghetto and obtain results which will provide a basis for change in the area. Anne Topolski, Public Relations coordinator for Walksafe, explained that the audit was initiated by Walksafe, but involves SSMU collaboration as well.

This is not the first time that a safety audit of the student ghetto has been attempted. An audit of the McGill campus performed by the Women's Union in 1991 gave SSMU the idea of an audit for the entire ghetto area. The Women's Union inspected the McGill campus and sought changes which could potentially increase the safety on the campus. The recommendations were presented to the McGill Senate and changes were made based on the report. Emergency phones were added around the campus and in elevators.

However, Topolski claims that the changes proposed by the safety audit in 1994 were essentially ignored and were not successfully implemented.

Sara Mayo, a volunteer for the Women's Union who was also involved in the audit three years ago

thought that the problem with the audit stemmed from the size of the reviewed area. The audit focused only on the area of the ghetto (which is defined by the MUC Police as being bordered by Sherbrooke, Pins, DuRocher and Peel). As a result, the City Council did not have any incentive to really change the situation. "It was difficult because it [the audit] did not cover the whole city, so presenting it to the city [council] did not do much," said Mayo.

According to Topolski, this year's audit will cover a larger area.

"It is a good idea for sure. Break-ins and theft in the car are the main problems that we have," said Nelson Marachel, Community Police Officer.

Despite the safety problems seen in the ghetto, the reported statistics from September of this year say that the crime is relatively low compared to the surrounding area of the city. In Area 19, a large section of Montréal which includes the ghetto, there were 56 cars stolen in the month of September. Only 2 of these thefts were from the ghetto. There were 33 break-ins in Area 19, only nine of which occurred in the student ghetto.

addresses McGill separatists of blackmail

sovereignty. He declared that this supposed sole argument of the separatists, for French-speaking Canadians to be a majority in their state, is the only authentic basis for the separatist movement, and that in the end it is wrong.

Dion illustrated this point by examining the disparity between the different separatist causes since the 1960's. According to Dion, the 1960's separatist cause was grounded in Québec's claim that their status was equivalent to that of a colony of Canada.

"In the 1970's it was that modern states need welfare states, and in order to modernize the Quebec society we must be a sovereign country. It was a time of René Levesque, and social democracy," he stated.

Later, Dion asserted, this argument no longer made sense as federalist states were able to modernize as well. The separatist movement came up with a new initiative for the 1980's.

At that time it was that Québec needed to be a sovereign state in order to promote its own business interests, and this too, Dion argued became an ineffective argument when the Québec business community illustrated an interest in remaining in Canada.

Moving to the early 1990's, Dion said that Lucien Bouchard, the present premier of Québec, was telling Quebecers to opt out of Canada because the country was bankrupt

and that future financial cuts to social programs were inevitable. Today, Bouchard is himself engaging in budget cuts, said Dion, comparing him to the radically conservative premiers of Alberta and Ontario, Ralph Klein and Mike Harris respectively.

By providing this background, Dion hoped to portray the only consistent thread in the sovereignty movement as being the will of separatists to attain a French-speaking majority in their own state. Every other objective, he argued, is simply an ideological guise conforming to whatever political paradigm is popular in Quebec at any given time.

As with many political lectures, time constraints and an effort to please the specific audience in attendance, constricted much of Dion's argument.

"I think that minister Dion greatly oversimplified the views of separatists," remarked Ben Hardy, an concerned U1 political science student.

Dion's criticism of this monodimensional aim resembled the emotional pleading that has permeated the arguments of both the federalists and the sovereigntists. Rather than using pertinent, empirical evidence to address the issue, his style of debate seems to have become the norm.

"Why [the aim of the separatists] is a wrong one, is because it is to say I will ask you to put Canada out of your heart, to give up

Canada; not because Canada is wrong or a bad country, but because we want to be a majority," Dion said.

He then gave a nostalgic account of when federalist Robert Bourassa was premier of Québec. Dion declared that no real solutions could take place until a non-separatist Québec government replaced Bouchard's Parti-Quebécois.

Although this was a plea for people of Quebec to elect a non-separatist leader in the next provincial election, it said nothing of what the present Liberal government under Jean Chrétien will do to address the issue at the present time.

"It seemed like he hoped that the separation issue would just go away," said Hardy.

During the question period after the speech, one male student noted that there has consistently been at least 25 per cent support sovereignty in Québec. Dion acknowledged this as truth, but seemed to contradict his earlier assertion in an effort to end the threat of secession completely. He stated that the Liberal government will have to work on those who voted yes in the last referendum who were not included in that 25 per cent.

If that core base is not addressed, many people seemed concerned that the threat of sovereignty will never cease to exist. The overall tone of the audience was positive, but the depth to which Dion answered the question of national unity, and the future of Canada is uncertain.

second safety audit results this time around

For the month of September there were no reported sexual assaults or thefts in the ghetto.

Marachel feels that improvements can be made despite these statistical figures. He said that trees block many balconies of apartments providing a more secluded environment for crime.

"If you hear something that is not normal, you should call the police. We are here for that," said Marachel.

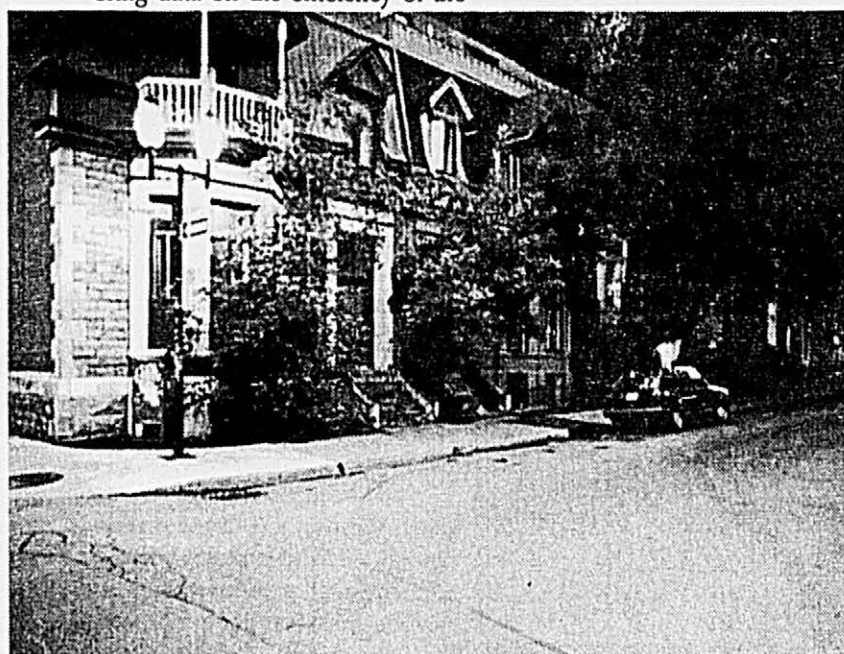
Topolski said the group plans to work with more organizations for better results. "We have a lot of co-operation among groups. We would like to make them all equal partners in this," Topolski said.

Mayo is unsure if this audit will accomplish more than the previous student ghetto audit. "I don't want to be negative, I think the audit is important. It's a difficult process and I wish them luck. I hope they are more successful then we were," Mayo said.

Mayo thought that the Community Police Department, which did not exist at the time of the last audit, may be helpful in acting upon recommendations from the audit because they are a link between the students and the city.

Walksafe plans to focus on gathering data on the efficiency of the

emergency services, the physical environment of the ghetto (i.e. lighting on streets) and how informed students are about their safety within the ghetto. The details of achieving these goals will be discussed at a meeting on November 5 at 6 p.m. in Shatner 435.



The McGill Ghetto at night- a safe place to be?

Halloween

BLOOD DRIVE
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Opening of La Brioche Dorée

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Women Holding the Door for Plan-G

The Women's Collective for Social Justice will make its presence felt

Amber L. Walsh

Plan-G is building momentum. As November 3rd approaches, groups representing all sectors of activism are rising to blockade the complex-G in Québec City on grounds of injustice.

Women's groups are making their voice be heard.

Anet Henrikso of the Women's Collective for Social Justice is working to ensure that women's issues are well represented at the demonstration. This Montréal based group is planning to work as an affinity group to barricade one or maybe two of the doors to Complex-G. They will represent women's issues at several levels

anti-poverty, environmental and global in its demands... but these are not short term demands, these are long term demands, setting a direction and vision for the Movement Populaire or the People's Movement or whatever they want to call it. This is only the beginning...we want to give the movement some power."

Henrikso says that her group does not expect the government to change as a result of plan-G, but hopes that it will set an precedent for the rest of the anti-poverty, worker rights and the women's movement. She hopes the protest shows the public how effective and

out most the employees which are largely support staff, consequently effectively closing down a large proportion of the Québec government. Henrikso points out that women are powerful components of the government at every level, making up many of the secretaries, support staff and government leaders.

Using non-violence and civil disobedience as political weapons against injustice the movement hopes to create legislation with what Henrikso calls the "teeth the to control the corporations and force the government to serve the people and not profits".



including universal pay-equity and socio-economic issues surrounding women on welfare.

Plan-G's objectives are wide and all-inclusive: decent income for everyone, reduction of the work week, an increase of minimum wage, universal access to free health care, social services and education, democratic community control over physical infrastructure, public services and environment, and a global economy and international relations based on equitable trade and solidarity.

Although critics have said that these demands are too broad and vague, Henrikso rebuts, "It's

powerful civil disobedience can be against the government and police.

"Civil disobedience is a very powerful political tool...it takes a certain amount of personal commitment and risk," she says.

As women, the Collective hopes to set an example of active solidarity among women. Henrikso says that the collective functions as an affinity group.

"We have something in common, a basis of unity, we're basing ours on being women and being for social justice," she says. "We want to show the government that women are a force for social justice that can no longer be ignored."

The barricade is expected to keep

The Women's collective functions non-hierarchically and works to provide a comfortable environment for all women. Currently, the collective is still in the process of defining its long-term goals. The organization is gathering activists at every level, from those willing to pass out flyers to poster to the actual Plan-G barricade.

For those interested in participating, the collective is providing an information and training seminar on Saturday, November 1st to go over the plan and discuss legality. For further information call: 499-3013 ext. 3.

From Bread

Wome

by Vida Panitch

As history progresses cultural values are constantly being redefined, and yet, as it is said, history does repeat itself. Just as the printing press instigated a new skill and defined a new culture, so is the internet. And just as women advanced the aims of the French Revolution, responsible for the popularization of the published word, so are they taking the helm of the means of culture redefinition in this new computer era.

Held in Ottawa from October 18-21, the Women's Internet Conference collectivized women from across Canada - women concerned that their voices be heard as internet policy is being shaped and defined.

From a historical perspective, culture redefinition has always been impacted by women joining collectively, concerned with issues of social welfare. In October 1789, for example, Parisian women marched to Versailles, forcing Louis XVI to return to Paris and face the Revolution his monarchy had wrought.

It was the dawn of the French Revolution that marked an increase in the importance of the printing press. Pamphlets were published and distributed by revolutionaries inciting action. The printing press, and widely available reading material, frightened an overwhelmingly illiterate population. New machinery, providing new information, is a scary thing if you do not have the requisite skills to make use of it. The only solution is to learn to read.

While the internet has provided a new means of information distribution, it has also sparked a fear amongst those with limited access to it.

The Conference was organized and coordinated by Scarlet Pollock and Jo Sutton, publishers of Women'space, a magazine by and for women on the internet. Comprised of an accumulation of women's experiences on the net, the book produced for the conference contends that, "If being on-line gives access to ideas and information not otherwise available, then being off-line means being left behind."

The aims of the Conference were to ensure that women of all class, ethnicity and sexual orientation have access to internet information, and that women's groups receive adequate funding to ensure in-

formation is available via the internet for women who seek it out.

Of course, there are barriers to the fulfillment of these aims. The members of the Conference sought to establish means of eradicating these barriers, thereby producing a Canadian women's womandate on where government spending towards internet literacy be directed.

Industry Canada has been assigned the task of allocating \$20 million in state funds to increase non-profit organizations' access to computers and internet literacy. "They have so far refused to designate any of the money for women's organizations," muses Michele Lansberg, a Toronto Star columnist. "The latter are, they mulishly insist, a 'special interest group.'"



Access to information becomes less hierarchical through the Internet. This freer flow of information is a factor of empowerment, as people are able to make decisions about their lives.

'special interest' groups have no more claims to the funding than anyone else.

The problem with this attitude,

Riots to Cyber-Revolution

Women Seeking Social Change via the Information Super-Highway

however, is that internet accessibility, as with everything else designated by capital minded delegates of the state, reflects only the interests of the status quo, white male, population. Such 'accessibility' will not be designed with regards to women's concerns, or more generally with the concerns of anyone not of a certain economic position and social standing. It will not take into account that more women rest below the poverty line, and thus have less access to computers than men, nor will it regard the fact that less women are in the work force and cannot access the internet from the office.

Harriet Amani, executive director of the Rainbow Women's Centre in Ottawa, a collective that trains low income women to use

women just don't bother."

Industry Canada will be meeting on November 6 to discuss the allocation of funds. In light of this, the

for the Advancement of Women (CRIA), the Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre, Women and Rural Economic Development

does not only imply, as the media would have us believe, that all women on the net fall prey to chat room stalkers, but that it should be a place where not only men, but the government at large cannot harass us. Cyber communication should be a forum for private, personal and independently chosen exchanges of ideas.

Mothers Support Society from Calgary; women farmers can discuss agricultural, local, and personal concerns with one another all across Canada; women suffering from domestic violence, or sexual assault can seek help from organizations anywhere in the country, or the world for that matter; specific health information on issues such as breast cancer and menopause is also available.

If being on-line gives access to ideas and information not otherwise available, then being off-line means being left behind

- Pollock and Sutton

womandate of the conference intended to produce a plan of action with regards to making internet accessibility sensitive to women's concerns. These concerns comprise the needs and interests of over 50% of the population, thereby nullifying the 'special interest' status the government has shackled women with

(WRED), DisAbleD Women and the Internet (DAWN), le Réseau national d'éducation femmes (RNEAF).

The priorities and barriers discussed in each individual workshop were collectively discussed by the conference members at large, nearly 200 women, on Monday afternoon. This discussion was then formatted into a plan of action to offer Industry Canada, on Tuesday morning before the conference came to a close.

Barriers that were discussed concerned two particular issues: how women's organizations can provide information via the internet, and how women can access to this information; as well as how the net can be used as a means of forming alliances and making women's voices heard.

These barriers are particularly economic and linguistic. Without the proper funding, women's groups cannot become internet literate, and thus, are unable to keep up alliances with similar groups and the women who rely on them. Neither can they sustain a budget that allows for the purchase of more computers and internet hook-up time. Nor for that matter can they then provide adequate web sights. Without these they cannot demonstrate to

women that information really is available in cyber space. It is also costly to translate the predominantly English net information into other languages.

The barriers that affect women themselves are parallel to those aforementioned. Low-income women cannot afford computers; rural women are geographically barred from easy access to local libraries, internet cafes and women's centres with computers; ethnic women, often fulfilling the two former categories, who speak neither French nor English, cannot read the information that is available.

Another issue is that of privacy. Women are harassed on the internet just as they are in everyday life. This

The question of internet pornography was not raised, but what was discussed was that censorship software, now available to ensure that the kids don't stumble across anything unsuitable, also censors all sights that employ the word feminist. Here again is an issue that has confounded us since the birth of the printing press, and the conference members did not hope to tackle in three days what we have been unable to do for decades.

It may appear that with so many obstacles perhaps the internet is not in fact a place to offer information to women. The positive aspects, however, and thus necessity of such accessibility becomes apparent through an examination of the very barriers that inhibit it.

With so many diverse issues surrounding women in the 1990's the internet is the one forum where they can all converge. Lesbian mothers can seek council from Lesbian

And the list goes on....

The internet is also a place where anonymity is assured. Women who do not feel comfortable asking for particular information or admitting to the need for council will not be denied the availability thereof.

"Access to information becomes less hierarchical through the internet," asserts Pollock. "This freer flow of information is a factor of empowerment, as people are able to obtain information which enables them to make more informed decisions about their lives."

And welcome to the Revolution of our own age of enlightenment. This time women are not just participating, they are taking control of the means of participation. It's about equality but it's also about shaping the direction the world is taking to meet our needs, not conforming our needs to meet the standards set by others. Bread and Roses.



the internet, comments on her experience. "I think the internet can do a lot for low income women. [But], most of them can't afford a computer or the access to Internet."

as means by which to deny us funding.

The conference was organized into a series of workshops headed by representatives of women's organizations and women with specific computer skills. These workshops were held during four one and a half hour sessions on Sunday the 19th and Monday morning of the 20th. In each time slot conference participants could choose to attend one of six or seven workshops based on topics ranging from violence against women to the shaping of social policy to how to design your own web page.

Conference participants and workshop coordinators included representatives of such organizations as the Canadian Research Institute

erarchical
information is a
able to obtain
ke more informed

-Pollock

the computer and the internet to take advantage of these services, and be ready to fight with many male youths; as a result low income

More Information

For more info about the conference contact Women'space at diamond@womenspace.ca, or check out the web page at

<http://www.womenspace.ca/>

Here are some other sights of interest: - Woman'space magazine can be found at d - Studio XX, a Montreal based digital media centre offering 'Femmes Branches' bohemian style digital art discussions monthly to all interested, and internet literacy courses, can be contacted at

studioxx@odyssee.net or by phone at (514) 845-7934.

- PAR-L, a web page with topic headings to direct you to other sights that may be of interest, can be found at

<http://www.unb.ca/PAR-L>

Plan G...

hyde park

With only one week to go before the massive Complex G blockade in Québec City, much of the political ideal of civil disobedience that inspired the action is being duly criticized, and put to a practical test.

On the one hand, Plan G is poised to become the most successful non-violent direct action in provincial history. It will mobilize well over two hundred blockades and hundreds more support demonstrators to paralyze the PQ's main civil service building. The primary intention is to warn that further cuts to our social programs will lead to further acts of.

On the other hand many more people, including some committed activists, will deliberately stay

away. They argue that Plan G organizers have been more interested in the technique of civil disobedience than in precise political demands, or more generally, that civil disobedience is "dated" or "will not work."

Civil disobedience (CD), of course, has a long history, with both success and failures to its name. The word "civil" here comes from the same root as "civic," meaning "citizen."

Civil disobedience is predicated on the concept that citizens, in their everyday act, play a much more central role in maintaining systems of oppression than is generally recognized. Simply by paying tax or by tolerating the presence in our

neighbourhoods of a certain corporation (which may rely on low-waged labour, with unsafe working conditions abroad) we are furthering oppression. Conversely, it is by stepping out of prescribed roles that we break the law and perform civil disobedience. Manifestations of this disobedience may be refusing to pay levies or occupying corporate offices.

CD also contains the term "civil" ('citizen') because the activist, rather than withdrawing completely, remains within, and engages in dialogue with the society whose behaviour is being questioned. Given their moral, communicative nature, CD should always be non-violent (though frequently justifiable "prop-

erty" damage - say of military hardware - is accepted as CD), and thoroughly open.

Those who criticize CD tend to treat it as a mere protest which governments can choose to ignore. But CD does not aim to persuade governments to grant change. It encourages large numbers of citizens to take to the streets and *effect* the necessary change for themselves. Considering it is planned for only one day, the Complex G action may seem symbolic or media-oriented. But within it lies at least the possibility that more people will agree with our message, and replicate the blockade on subsequent days. Cumulatively, this could all have a serious dent on the operation of the PQ government,

and for changes that otherwise would never have been conceded. This is the democratic premise of CD: when mass numbers of people act in consent, even the most dictatorial regimes will be unable to get in their way.

None of this is to say that civil disobedience is the Panacea. There are certainly circumstances as when oppressed population is not large enough to tackle its opposition (the 1975 East Timor crisis is such an example). But CD is still largely an unexplored path of resistance of uncertain, but seemingly huge potential to disarm conflicts and redeem the oppressor as well as the oppressed.

- Chris Scott

...and Student Concerns

Over the last two weeks, I have heard opponents of Plan G wonder how the six umbrella demands of the Plan G could all be seen as student concerns, given their far reaching social aims. They wonder how a decent standard of life for all people, minimum wages above the poverty line, an approach to work that maximizes productivity and decreases alienation, free and accessible social programs, more democratic involvement in public infrastructure (including university infrastructure, of course) and international relations based on fair trade and solidarity could be called "student issues."

I must admit, I am always a little puzzled by this question. Do

these people live lives of isolation? Do they think that students don't work, or aren't involved in any business related activities? Do they think students don't want adequate health care? Do they think that students never finish school and end up living in poverty, or needing social assistance? Do they think that students aren't women and single mothers who are hit the hardest by the cuts, and by indecent work conditions?

More importantly, it seems that they are absolutely unaware that the attack on education is related to a larger political agenda which is increasingly taking institutions and programs out of the hands of the public, and turning them into for-

profit ventures.

They do not seem to realize that working in coalition for a large public uprising to reclaim these institutions and programs is the only way to effect self-mandated policy makers. Further, working in coalition is the only way to gain support for education and student issues and to break the stereotype of self-centered students whining over fee increases.

And if it were the case that Plan G does not adequately represent student issues, why is it that over fifteen student associations and organizations have endorsed it, including both graduate and undergraduate student associations at Concordia, the PGSS, QPIRG, and

AGSEM at McGill, the Chaire d'études socio-économiques de l'UQAM and the Comité de mobilisation interdépartemental de l'Université de Montréal? Why then were two of the initiating organizations (le Mouvement pour le droit à l'éducation and Coalition Y) student organizations?

Given all these givens, I am forced to conclude that arguments against Plan G based on the fact that Plan G does not adequately represent student issues are in fact illogical. Not only does Plan G largely represent student concerns, it goes beyond student issues, to the heart of the matter, and it helps build support for education in other sectors of society.

For those students who are interested in fighting for a just society—a society that does more for its members than keep tuition fees low, a society that considers a decent standard of living (including the possibility for post-secondary education) a right—buses will be leaving from Place des Arts metro (Jeanne Mance exit) at 7h00, November 3rd. Please call the Quebec office of the Canadian Federation of Students at 398-1600, for more information and to reserve a place.

-Erin Runions
Quebec Chairperson,
Canadian Federation of Students

Plan G - continued from cover

Phipps said she was unsure if civil disobedience and the demonstration is the most effective way to address the demands.

"My main concern is not the principle but the means behind it," said Phipps at the council meeting on October 23.

When asked if she would attend the protest, Phipps responded no, saying that since SSMU has decided not to support Plan-G and that she has not been mandated to go.

The McGill branch of the Quebec Public Research Group (QPIRG) and the Post Graduate Student's Society (PGSS) are fully supporting Plan-G. Some QPIRG volunteers in collaboration with PGSS are organizing the McGill Action Group - a group of McGill students that will be attending the protest in Quebec City. Sara Mayo of QPIRG

McGill stated that "We support it because it talks about issues that affect everybody's life. We feel strongly that we have to fix the problems of our society." QPIRG has given \$400 to Plan G.

Philippe Duhamel of CANEVAS, (Collectif d'Actions non violent autonomes) one of the groups initiating the action, explained that the project started 11 months ago in reaction to the CEGEP students being thrown out of the Complex G during their demonstration against tuition hikes. "Some students were injured in police action and Plan G is in response to that and against the cuts to education and other social programs," he said.

Phipps said that, if pressed, the SSMU would offer a bus to trans-

port McGill students to the demonstration, and she offered her support of the students that were involved in Plan G.

SSMU's decision shocked many student groups.

Democracy has failed because our voice has not been heard
-Patrick Borden

"It is unfortunate because a lot of students are involved and Plan G does focus on education and students groups like McGill need to come together and go beyond the corporate... issue in order to win against a powerful enemy," said Duhamel.

Patrick Borden of CANEVAS believes that the means of civil

disobedience is the legacy of this action.

"SSMU might hold ideas against Plan G but our means are based on democracy. Democracy has failed because our voice has not been heard and through civil disobedience people will have the knowledge of what Plan G is all about."

Commenting on SSMU's reasons, Smaller referred to it as "isolationist thinking" and said, "Plan G is a coalition of diverse groups bringing together their ingredients into a soup and I don't like a soup with only one ingredient."

The groups involved in Plan G include students, artists, first nation peoples, welfare recipients, housing groups. The six umbrella demands

of Plan-G's organizers are: a decent guaranteed income without discrimination for all people, employed or unemployed, an increase in the minimum wage to a level above the poverty line, reduction of work time without loss of pay, specifically the progressive reduction of the work week to 32 hours, free and universal access to high quality social, health and educational services, democratic, community control of our collective infrastructure, public services and the environment and a global economy and international relations based on trade and solidarity.

Buses will be leaving for the November 3rd demonstration at 6:00 a.m. and 7:15 a.m. from the Place-des-Arts metro, Jeanne Mance exit. Info: 273-1560.

The Struggle in Chiapas continues

Zapatistas vow not to surrender

by Nadine Pedersen

from the UVic Martlet

CHIAPAS, MEXICO (CUP)—Light slanted through the spaces in the rough wood walls and fell over the table where three Mayan children, back from a day in the fields, sat drawing in the Civilian Peace Camp kitchen. Between them, they shared two broken Crayola pencils and a pen. I sat and watched them. They drew things from around their village of Laguna de Santa Elena: chickens, horses, dogs, corn, and military helicopters...

It was my fifth day as a human rights observer in this small Tzeltal community of roughly 350 inhabitants, and other than a few airplanes to the east, I had yet to see any substantial military movement. Without binoculars I had no idea what the estimated 1,000 Mexican soldiers based five minutes away were up to, unless a cacophony of bullet fire signaled they were practicing using their weapons. Things were relatively peaceful. Until this day.

As the children drew, a large blue and yellow helicopter came down from the north, circled low over the thatched-roof houses of the village, hovering momentarily over the fields where cattle grazed before moving on to the nearby army base.

Maybe its reason for circling was to see what the Zapatista supporters in the village were up to; more likely it was meant to remind the people of Santa Elena of the constant presence of the military.

The sounds of insects once again filled the hot air after the helicopter left. I returned to my quarters. The children were still there drawing—they had grown indifferent to these sweeps from above.

As one of hundreds of foreign volunteers spread throughout the state of Chiapas, Mexico, my job was to monitor the military for any human rights abuses and offer protection to the people of Santa Elena as a neutral observer. The soldiers whose movements I was following belonged to a special division of the Mexican army known as La Fuerza de Tarea Arcoiris, the Rainbow Task Force. The Arcoiris, comprised of the top soldiers in the army, had been specifically created to deal with the conflict in Chiapas, which began almost three years ago.

ZAPATISTAS ON THE RISE

The conflict officially began on Jan. 1, 1994, the day the North American Free Trade Agreement went into effect. On that day the Zapatista National Liberation Army, a large group

of indigenous rebels, took over several small cities in Southeastern Chiapas.

The Zapatistas were infuriated by the removal of article 27 of the Mexican Constitution which allowed for the ownership of communal lands—under NAFTA. They also argued that the Mexican government, which they say has essentially been a dictatorship for the past 68 years, was carrying out "an undeclared genocidal war" against their people for many years.

On Jan. 6, 1994, they explained their actions to the international community in a communiqué: "Our Zapatista troops began a series of politico-military actions with the principle objective being to let all the people of Mexico and the world know the miserable conditions that millions of Mexicans, especially we the indigenous people, live in. With these actions that began we also let people know our decision to fight for our elementary rights by the only way the government authorities will allow: armed struggle."

They also gave a list of 13 fundamental demands they wanted met, including the right to independence, culture, work, housing, land, health care, food, education, democracy, justice, liberty, access to information and peace. In August 1995, after consulting with citizens, the Zapatistas added fighting corruption, security, and defense of the environment to their list of demands.

LIFE IN CHIAPAS

The living conditions in Chiapas are a testimony to why these demands were made. There are 3.5-million people living in the region, two-thirds of them in rural communities such as Santa Elena. Many rural communities have no means of transport and communication other than mountain trails, and two-thirds have no sewage service.

Seventy-two out of 100 children in the region never complete first grade. And if they do, chances are they won't go much further as only half the schools offer instruction above third grade.

Fifty-four per cent of the population of Chiapas (80 per cent in highland and forest areas) suffer from malnutrition. There are no medical services available to 1.5-million people and there is only one doctor per 2,000 people. And while there are seven hotel rooms for every 1,000 tourists in the region, only 1,000 hospital beds exist for every 1,000 Chiapaneco citizens.

In Santa Elena, the medical

clinic is comprised of a cabinet containing over-the-counter medicine, the medical official a villager trained in first aid. For proper medical care, villagers have to hike several hours through the mountainous jungle until they arrive at the closest dirt road, where they wait several hours for a bus that takes four-and-a-half hours to reach the nearest town with adequate medical facilities.

In Chiapas it is estimated that over 14,500 people die every year from treatable diseases such as enteritis, respiratory infections, parasites, malaria, amoebas, salmonella, dengue, trachoma, pulmonary tuberculosis, typhus, measles and cholera.

But while the people of Chiapas are very poor, the land is very rich. Everyday 517-billion cubic feet of gas and 92,000 barrels of petroleum are sucked out of the land, while the Lacondon jungle is being searched for more deposits.

The area also produces 35 per cent of Mexico's coffee. And it exports avocado, banana, cattle, corn, cacao, honey, mamey, mango, melon, sorghum, soy, sugar, tamarind and tobacco. The people who grow these goods, for the most part, live below the national poverty line.

One-third of Chiapanecos, including the people of Santa Elena, lack electricity while 55 per cent of Mexico's hydroelectricity is generated in their state.

"Today we say enough is enough," wrote *Z a p a t i s t a* Subcomandante Marcos in the First Declaration from the Lacondon jungle.

"We, the men and women, full and free, are conscious that the war that we have declared is our last resort, but also a just one."

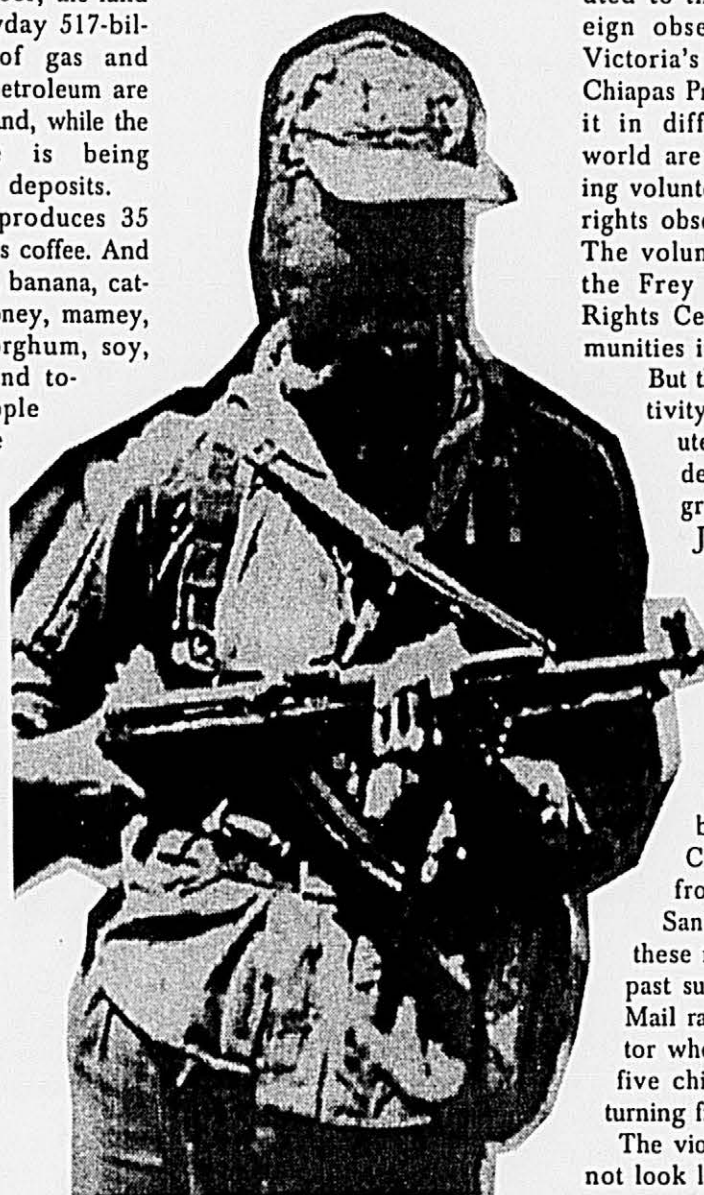
A somewhat sympathetic international community tuned in through their televisions and computers and watched to see how the Mexico's government would react to the Zapatista insurgency. Weary of international criticism, the government responded with measured force and on Jan. 12, 1994 agreed to meet with the Zapatistas to begin a series of peace talks through which the two sides

tried to resolve the conflict without further bloodshed.

The world soon lost interest in the faltering peace talks, however, and mainstream media looked elsewhere for news. The lack of media attention allowed the military to further push the Zapatistas into the Lacondon jungle, and begin what is now recognized as a "low intensity war" against the citizens of Chiapas.

CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE

Thousands of indigenous people fled their homes as Mexican soldiers went into their villages, pillaged their houses, burned



their crops, and stole or killed their livestock on the pretense of looking for Zapatista leaders. There were also reports of kidnapping, torture, rape and murder.

The people of Santa Elena (less than half of whom identify themselves as supporters of the Zapatistas) fled into the jungle for 20 days in February 1995. During that time elders, men, women and children alike lived in fear with no shelter and little food.

They returned to their devastated homes after the Civil-

ian Peace Camp was set up. From the village, the large military base was easily visible. The soldiers claimed a lagoon which the villagers had used for washing and surrounded it with barbed wire. The villagers now have to use brackish well water for cooking, bathing, and laundry, and as a result many children get sick. For a while, soldiers entered the village and took water from the wells for their helicopters, but the continual presence of the human rights

observers eventually stopped this from happening.

Reports of human rights violations by the Mexican Army have decreased recently. This is partially attributed to the presence of foreign observers, like myself. Victoria's Building Bridges in Chiapas Project and others like it in different parts of the world are continually recruiting volunteers to act as human rights observers in the region. The volunteers are placed by the Frey Bartolome Human Rights Center in at-risk communities in Chiapas.

But the drop in military activity is also being attributed to the rise of clandestine para-military groups such as Paz y Justicia (Peace and Justice), who are now apparently paid to do the dirty work.

Reports of these groups' human rights abuses filter in on an almost weekly basis. While I was in Chiapas, five children from an area north of Santa Elena were shot by these mercenaries. And this past summer, the *Globe and Mail* ran an article by a doctor who had treated another five children, shot while returning from a friend's funeral. The violence in Chiapas does not look like it is going to end soon.

Negotiations seem to be going nowhere, and the world has, for the most part, forgotten the war the Zapatistas are fighting. Meanwhile, governments around the world discuss new trade strategies, including the Multilateral Agreement on Investment, which is based on NAFTA.

"We are here," announced the Zapatistas as the beginning of this year. "We continue to be here. We have not forgotten, we will not surrender."

(Note: Pedersen spent July and August in Chiapas as a human rights observer.)

national news summary

FROM COAST TO COAST, THE DAILY LEAVES
NO STONE UNTURNED...

Guidelines for human research to be developed

Regina—The Medical Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council are in the process of developing a strict set of guidelines for all research involving humans, but some universities are concerned that this common code of ethics may be too onerous.

The three councils felt that it was necessary to develop a common code to improve accountability, says Michael McDonald, director of the Centre for Applied Ethics at the University of British Columbia and a contributor to the draft code.

This fall, the councils are conducting five regional consultations for university faculty to give input on the draft code.

One concern being raised by a number of universities is that while the new code is appropriate for medical research, it is too stringent for the sciences and social sciences. Because of its rigidity, research-intensive universities are sending out warnings about costs if the new code is adopted.

Another concern raised by the university has to do with how strictly the new code will be applied, and who will be in charge of its application.

If a university doesn't comply with the code, McDonald says, repercussions would likely come in the form of a refusal of funding by the concerned research council.

Liberal credibility questioned

Ottawa—The federal Liberals are trying to sell themselves as the party which is standing up for post-secondary education, but the opposition, students and administrators, aren't buying.

Higher education continues to be an important theme of the Liberal's second mandate — highlighted by the creation of a \$1-billion scholarship fund for needy and high-achieving students — as the federal government tries to portray itself as the party of choice for youth.

In his recent economic update, Finance Minister Paul Martin pledged his party to keeping post-secondary education accessible. He lauded Liberal commitments to provide financial assistance to students and to help them with debt management.

But some people are having a hard time believing this message from a government that has cut \$2.29-billion from transfer payments to the provinces for post-secondary education since 1993-94.

Parties join to change BC elections

Victoria—The B.C. branches of the Reform and Marxist-Leninist political parties, along with a host of others across the political spectrum, have joined together to create the Electoral Change Coalition of British Columbia to push for electoral reforms in the province.

"It's the reason I got involved in politics in the first place," said David Secord, president of the provincial Reform party and a vice-president of coalition. "Having recognized that [the electoral system is the problem], it was certainly exciting for me to discover that people from a broad range of perspectives agree."

Secord and the Marxist-Leninists are joined by the provincial Green, Conservative and Family Coalition parties, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, Canadians for Direct Democracy, and the Progressive Democratic Alliance in their efforts to reform.

The group is lobbying the provincial government for an electoral system that would more accurately reflect the wishes of voters. They would like to see the current first-past-the-post system replaced. Under the latter system, a party must win a seat in a riding in order to be represented in the provincial legislature.

—Craig Sanders

Source: The Canadian University Press

"Throw them a doggy bone but take away their food"

...continued from page 1

Marois' announcement represents a step in the right direction, but it's not enough, says Nikolas Ducharme, president of the Fédération des étudiant(e)s de Québec.

Erin Runions, chair of the Quebec component of the Canadian Federation of Students, agrees.

"It's sort of like, throw them a doggy bone but take away their food," she said. "When you're cutting \$1.2-million in education [funding] and then making it easier to pay back loans, it's kind of a contradiction."

Runions says the real solution to

the problem of student indebtedness is lowering tuition fees, and increasing government funding to post-secondary institutions.

Ducharme says his organization wants "reform of the student aid program that fits with the socioeconomic reality of students in the 1990s."

He says, for example, that the Quebec government should make part-time students eligible for student aid, alluding to the fact that many students have to work part-time in order to make ends meet, and consequently can't carry a full course load.

Sonya Cyr, a student at the Université de Québec à Montréal, says Marois' plans sound good to her, but adds that it should be applied more broadly.

"The idea is good, but [the changes] should be for everyone," she said.

Marois' announcement came almost a month after the release of a report by a Université de Montréal working committee on student debt, led by economics professor Claude Montmarquette. Many of the changes proposed by Marois, which she says will take effect in 1998, were outlined in the report.

...events

Tuesday, October 28

•Andrew Sweeny with Nadia Bashalani and Mike Woodsworth and Special Guest, Conrad Sichler. Café Sarajevo, 2080 Clark, 21h.

•Volunteers needed for a Senior Day Centre at the Hospital of Hope. Tuesdays 9h30-12h30. Info: Rena Halickman, 483 2121.

Wednesday, October 29

•Protest in opposition to APEC's Tourism Agenda. Chateau Frontenac, Québec City. Departure: 3680 Jeanne Mance (Metro Place des Arts) 8h30. Info: 739 1185.

•Post Abortion Support

Group. Women's Union, Shatner 423, 19h.

Thursday, October 30

•Coffee house with performers, open mike, drinks for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Thompson House, 20h. \$3.

Upcoming

November 3-7

•QPIRG Week — variety of social and environmental justice events on campus. Info: 398 7432.

Wednesday, November 12

•Centre for Developing Area

Studies presents a seminar series on "Globalization, Resistance and Development," beginning with Anick Druelle, speaking on "Strategies of Women's Movements in the Context of Globalization." 3715 Peel, Seminar Room. 12h30-14h.

Ongoing

•Queer Line offers information and referrals for the queer and queer-positive community of McGill and Montréal. Monday - Friday, 20h-23h.

•Sexual Assault Centre of McGill Students' Society offers a confidential listening service. Info: Monday - Friday, 10h-17h. Helpline: 18h-00h, 398 8500.



20 Years Ago This Week

The Daily looks back for no apparent reason

Since the Daily began publishing in 1977, all of the old issues have been kept in bound volumes in our archives. Looking through these volumes, it seems remarkable how little students' concerns have changed over the years. These are some of the featured stories from this week 20 years ago. My, how we like clichés...

Monday, October 24, 1977

Hundreds of gay men and women gathered downtown Saturday night to protest police harassment. The demonstration was in response to a police raid the previous evening at Trux, a club on Stanley St. that caters to a gay clientele. The

protest at the corner of Stanley and Ste. Catherine Streets blocked traffic in all directions, and the MUC riot squad was present but little violence was reported.

Friday, October 28, 1977

According to a senior Concordia official, the Quebec government was to follow Ontario's lead and institute differential tuition fees for foreign students. Beginning 1978, the Quebec Ministry of Education announced they may charge international students a differential fee that would raise tuition to approximately \$1500. The Ministry refused to confirm the story, and officials said that nothing would be announced for a few months. Differential fees for for-

oreign students were included as part of the Parti Québécois platform, which states the "Canadian students indirectly fund education through taxes, foreign students do not."

Monday, October 31, 1977

Over 60% of the student body at the Université de Montréal announced they would defy the administration's demand that tuition fees be paid by November 1st, according to a study taken by the university's Geography Department Student Association. Students were protesting the administration's new fee payment policy. Previously, payments were not due until the spring, when government loans and bursaries are received.

daily classifieds

Ads may be placed through the Daily Business Office, Room B-07, University Centre, 9h00-14h00. Deadline is 14h00, two working days prior to publication. McGill Students & Staff (with valid ID): \$4.65 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, \$4.10 per day. General Public: \$5.90 per day, or \$4.95 per day for 3 or more consecutive days. Extra charges may apply, prices include applicable GST or PST. Full payment should accompany your advertising order and may be made in cash or by personal cheque (for amounts over \$20 only). For more information, please visit our office or call 398-6790. **WE CANNOT TAKE CLASSIFIED ADS OVER THE PHONE. PLEASE CHECK YOUR AD CAREFULLY WHEN IT APPEARS IN THE PAPER.** The Daily assumes no financial responsibility for errors, or damages due to errors. Ad will re-appear free of charge upon request if information is incorrect due to our error. The Daily reserves the right not to print any classified ad.

HELP WANTED

Subjects Needed: Women studying at McGill for next 2 years to participate in Research study on "Persistent Human Papilloma Virus." Virus is linked with development of cervical cancer in some women. Financial incentive offered. For info, call: Gail Kelsall, Research Nurse, 398-2915/6926 e-mail: gailk@oncology.lan.mcgill.ca.

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Comparative Religions Course - Mon 7:30-9pm, Oct. 20-Nov. 24 at St Andrews-Dominion-Douglas Church, 687 Roslyn, Westmount. Cost: \$5 per session or \$20 for all 6. Cheryl 486-1165.

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NOTICES

QPIRG Refund Period. October 14-Nov. 4. Any student wishing to relinquish membership in QPIRG may come to 3647 University Street, 1-5pm (Monday to Friday) and apply for a \$3 refund. This is the portion of the student activity fee which would otherwise fund research, education and action on social and environmental issues.

Avez-vous lu le



cette semaine?

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Visiting Professor, School of Public Administration,
Carleton University;
Political Science Department,
Haifa University

Scientists From The Former Soviet Union
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Date: 31st October, 1997 (Friday)
Time: 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Place: Room 201, 3463 Peel Street

Everyone is welcome to participate in this talk.

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WED. OCT 29 9:30PM HARD ROCK CAFE

Is There a New Cultural Ice Age in Canada?

Cutbacks in funding have affected the Canadian arts scene in the past decade. What strategies have been enacted to keep the arts alive? What measures need to be taken in the future?

Tom Henighan

Professor of English, Carleton University; Author, *The Presumption of Culture: Structure, Strategy & Survival in the Canadian Cultural Landscape* (1996) and *Ideas of North: A Guide to Canadian Arts & Culture* (1997)

Shirley Thomson

Director, National Gallery of Canada
Former Secretary-General, UNESCO
Past Director, McCord Museum

Where: room 112 Otto Maass Chemistry Building
(via Sherbrooke, between McGill College and University)
Date: Thursday, October 30, 4 to 6 pm

All are welcome to attend.

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NEW COURSE WINTER TERM 1997-1998

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106-202B

Tuesday, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Offered by Mr. David McKnight & Professor Jane Everett

A course on the history of Canadian Cultures from the mid-19th century to the present. This course surveys the diversity of Canadian cultural identities through literature, drama, art and the mass media. Guest lecturers from the academic and cultural communities will be invited. Some of the course material will be in French; an ability to read French is required.

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NOUVEAU COURS SESSION HIVER 1997-1998

Canadian Cultures: Context & Issues (Les cultures canadiennes: leur contexte et leurs problèmes)

106-202B

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Cours sur l'histoire des cultures canadiennes depuis le milieu du 19e siècle jusqu'à présent. Le cours étudiera les différentes identités canadiennes par le biais de la littérature, le théâtre, l'art et les médias. Il y aura des conférenciers invités provenant tant du milieu universitaire que culturel. Certains ouvrages en français seront étudiés; la capacité de lire le français est nécessaire.